



MOMENTUM

(**smart** living by bike)

david byrne

LEADING THE BIKE LIFESTYLE
AND **LOVING IT**



+
the
helmet
DEBATE



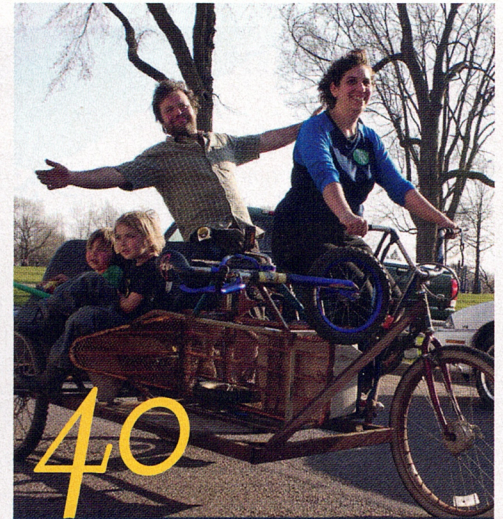
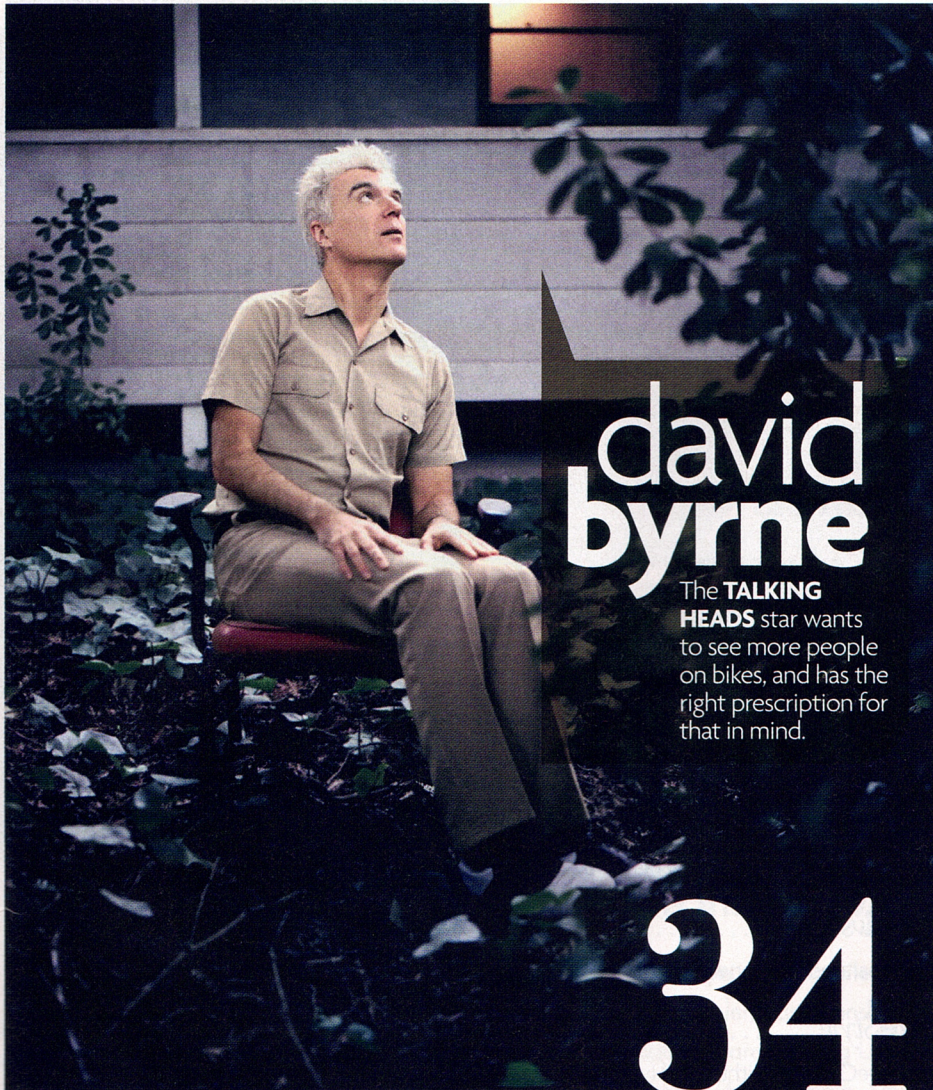
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EXPLORE
minneapolis by bike

issue #

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minneapolis

Our adventure series continues with a look at the **CITY OF LAKES**.



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MARK JOHANN is a San Francisco, CA-based photographer whose images of David Byrne grace our front cover and contents page (see above). He photographed Byrne at **HUNTERS POINT**, an old naval shipyard in San Francisco. You can see more of Johann's work at MARKJOHANN.COM.

contribs



1 elly blue

Elly Blue lives in Portland, OR, and works as a freelance writer. She is a regular contributor to *Grist*, *BikePortland* and *Momentum*. She publishes a feminist bicycle zine and is writing a book for people new to bicycling. She is the cofounder of PDX by BIKE, a resource for visitors to Portland who want to discover the city by bicycle, which is scheduled to launch in May 2011. See her feature about bicycle helmets on p. 37. [Twitter @ellyblue](#)

2 tom everson

Tom Everson is the owner/ founder of Cars-R-Coffins and author of this issue's city feature about Minneapolis on p.40. He recently shuttered the CRC refocus energy on writing and long, gravel road rides throughout the Midwest region and single-speed mountain bike rides on any and all single track. He lives in Minneapolis with girlfriend Kelly Mac and two cats, Pescado and Molly.

3 aretha munro

Aretha Munro is an intern at Momentum's Vancouver, BC, office where she gets to write, research and talk about people and bikes – she sourced the bike helmet statistics found on p. 39. Munro recently graduated from the University of Victoria with a degree in anthropology and environmental studies. This summer, she is excited to explore BC's Southern Gulf Islands on two wheels.

4 bryna hallam

Bryna Hallam, Momentum's Victoria, BC-based Arts and Culture Editor, listened to David Byrne's music almost non-stop for six months in anticipation of interviewing the former Talking Heads performer and cycling advocate, see p. 34. Her favorite tune at the moment: "Here Lies Love," about former Philippine first lady Imelda Marcos. [Twitter @brynahallam](#)

5 mark emery

Mark Emery started out in photography and bicycles at the age of 15. An oatmeal box that he turned into a pinhole camera quickly gave way to a film SLR. He reluctantly moved to digital 20 years later, though occasionally shoots and develops his own black-and-white film. A mechanic turned mechanical engineer, he is commonly seen on group rides as well as relaxing with friends at local Minneapolis bicycle shops. While his single shot is featured on p. 37, his Minneapolis pics are used all over p. 40 and 41.

6 darko sikman

Darko Sikman, whose photos are featured in our Ready to Roll photo spread, p. 28, spent the past 10 years traveling around the world. His nomadic lifestyle allowed him to create a diverse photography portfolio that includes everything from weddings and portraits to high fashion and fine art. He settled down in Vancouver, BC, last summer and currently works as a freelance photographer. [darkoroom.com](#)

MOMENTUM MAG

is an independent media company that promotes, encourages and inspires Smart Living by Bike.

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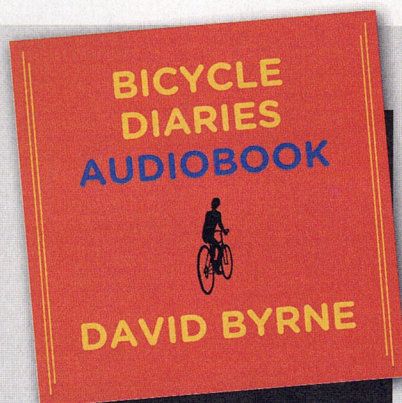
Subscriptions and Customer Service
SUBSCRIPTIONS@MOMENTUMPLANET.COM
PRINTED SIX TIMES A YEAR. 19.95 YR US • CANADA/ 39.95 INTERNATIONAL
[HTTP://WWW.MOMENTUMPLANET.COM/SUBSCRIBE](http://WWW.MOMENTUMPLANET.COM/SUBSCRIBE)
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PUBLICATION MAIL AGREEMENT #40565523G

PRINTED IN THE

david byrne: ON BIKES & CITIES

WRITER: **BRYNA HALLAM**



1. David Byrne with one of his art bike racks in NYC. David Byrne, *The Jersey*, 2008 powder coated steel 42" x 70" x 6" (106.7 cm x 177.8 cm x 15.2 cm)

PHOTOS BY G.R. CHRISTMAS / COURTESY PACEWILDENSTEIN © DAVID BYRNE, COURTESY PACEWILDENSTEIN

2. "Torre de Dulces" (Candy Tower) - a glimpse of the unusual spotted on a ride in Mexico.

PHOTO BY DAVID BYRNE

3. Merida, Mexico, at sunset. Captured by David Byrne during his travels through the city.

PHOTO BY DAVID BYRNE

BICYCLE DIARIES: AUDIOBOOK

By David Byrne
\$19.95 USD

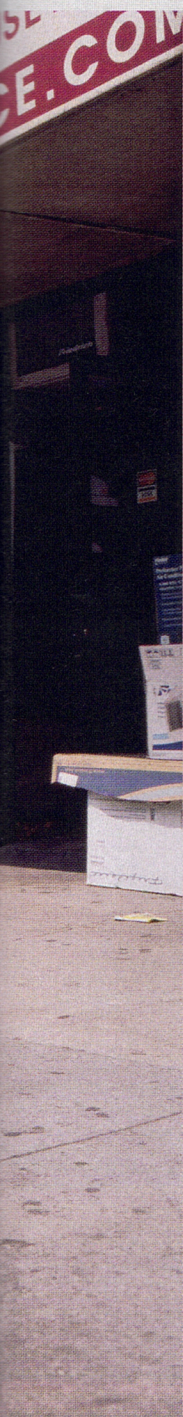
REVIEWER: **DAVID NIDDRIE**

David Byrne's excellent *Bicycle Diaries* (reviewed in *Momentum 41*) is re-assembled as a unique audiobook in this new, digital-only edition. Clocking in at more than eight hours, *Bicycle Diaries: Audiobook* sets the tone quickly with original music, sound effects and Byrne himself narrating the tales.

Byrne's bike has accompanied him as he toured the world with his music and art. Here, he takes you along for the ride; noisy street scenes, music from open windows, the tinkle of silverware - all transport you to a new place while Byrne waxes poetic. It works. You find yourself rolling through the cultural capitals of the world and catching up on what's happening from the vantage point of a bicycle saddle.

Inspired by radio shows of old, the listening experience is akin to audio art with a strong running narrative. Consumable in any order, the 11 chapters offer a personal travelogue on global affairs, culture and, yes, the role of the bicycle in shaping our urban world. Available for purchase at bicycle-diaries.com





Listening to David Byrne talk about bikes, you might forget that the man is a legendary musician and world-famous artist, as well as an impassioned cyclist who's keen to improve infrastructure and get more people on two wheels.

But the former Talking Heads performer is a reluctant advocate, although he is becoming one of the most famous faces of the North American bike revolution, thanks to his online journal and the book it spawned – *The Bicycle Diaries* (see the audiobook review on p. 34). His follow-up tour, *Cities, Bicycles and the Future of Getting Around*, features a set of arty bike racks and stories from his years in the saddle.

"I haven't wanted to be a real advocate or proselytizer," he said in a phone interview from New York. "But if I sense that people are kind of ready and willing to try something, later I'll say, 'Well yes, this is how you do it, and this is how it's done, and this is my experience, and the rest is up to you.'"

The tour, which took Byrne to 16 cities in North America and could carry on to South America, also featured local civic leaders, planners and bicycle advocates. It was less about converting people and more about creating a critical mass, he said. "The events tend to bring together people who are sometimes of like mind, but haven't met yet."

The number of those like-minded people is growing as cycling becomes more popular, something Byrne attributes to a wider change in attitude. "It used to be considered something that you did as a child or you did as a sport, but there was no in-between," he said, "and now it's a little bit more acceptable."

He should know: Byrne's been cruising the streets of New York on two wheels since the early 1980s, when he collected his trusty adolescent ride – an English three-speed – from his parents' suburban home and brought it to the city. He now rides a "new version of an old-school bike," made by Jamis, when in New York; a Dahon folding bike accompanies him on his travels.

The original decision to ride was made out of convenience – a bike is a fast, cheap way to travel – but since then, Byrne's motivations have shifted to include the liberation, exhilaration and connection bikes provide.

"I don't think people are doing it to be more green, or because it's good for exercise, or something like that," Byrne said of cycling. "I think those are side-effects. People are doing it because it actually feels good, because it sometimes saves money, and sometimes is the fastest way to get from A to B if you're not going too far. You have a feeling of self-empowerment, that you're in charge of when you go, how you go and when you get there."

Of course, there are things that could help more people make the decision to ride. Infrastructure – Byrne would like to see more linkages between existing bike paths and routes – and education are a big part of that picture. In order to work, he said, they need to develop together.



"I heard a Danish guy say you can't just throw a million people out there at once and expect them to know how to do this," he said. "You'll have a kind of chaos, you'll have people having accidents and injuries and all kinds of things going on. You have to kind of bring it in gradually so they learn how to behave when using bike infrastructure."

But to develop a perfect urban cycling environment, what you really need is a perfect city.

"Ideally, our cities become exciting, sexy and profitable places to live, play and work – that's the most important part," Byrne said. "When people have no investment in the places they play or work or live, they act accordingly."



TUNE YOUR RIDE TO DAVID BYRNE'S PLAYLIST

By Bryna Hallam

If you're curious as to what music has caught David Byrne's ear lately, the answer is only a click away. The artist started his eponymous online music stream, *Radio David Byrne*, in 2005. The music is eclectic, ranging from psychedelic, to country, to Turkish pop. There's even (of course) a playlist (August 2010) classified as good bike riding music – and described by Byrne as likely to "suck one into a trippy cosmic vortex of sensuous timelessness." Perfect for a leisurely ride in the sun.

- + **Jóhann Jóhannsson**—Odi Et Amo
- + **David Behrman**—On the Other Ocean
- + **Skuli Sverrisson**—Summer Star Water
- + **Silver Mt. Zion**—13 Angels Standing Guard 'Round the Side of Your Bed
- + **Slow Six**—The Pulse of This Skyline with Lightning Like Nerves
- + **DB**—Hurdy Drone—
- + **Julia Kent**—Gardermoen
- + **Sebastián Escofet**—Soledad

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